

## **Minutes**

### **Asheville City Council Public Safety Committee Meeting July 21, 2014 Training Room, Municipal Building**

Council Members: Cecil Bothwell, Jan Davis, Chris Pelly

Staff: Assistant City Manager Paul Fetherston, Chief William Anderson, Deputy Chief Wade Wood, Captain Stony Gonce, Captain Tim Splain, Lt. Gary Gudac, Lt. Jannice Hawkins, Lisa Taube, Chief Michael Knisely, Chief Barry Hendren, Communication and Public Engagement Director Dawa Hitch, and Executive Assistant Alex Carmichael

Guests: Byron Greiner, David Nutter

Chairperson Davis called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

1. **Approval of the June Minutes:** Councilmember Bothwell motioned to approve the June minutes. Councilmember Pelly seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
2. **Presentations and Reports:**
  - a. **APD Strategic Operations Plan Report**

Chief Anderson presented the Department's three year Strategic Operations Plan. The planning process began in September of 2013 when Harry Dolan and Associates were brought in as consultants. Input was gathered through mandatory meetings with all department staff, community meetings, and meetings with other public safety agencies. The process identified six focus areas: recruitment and retention, leadership, organizational structure, equipment and technology, community quality of life, and agency outreach and communication. Under each focus area, goals and action items were developed along with specific timelines for performance measurement.

Councilman Bothwell asked if the Department currently conducts centralized morning roll calls. Chief Anderson explained that there used to be roll call meetings out in the districts, but the Department moved to a centralized roll call two months ago with a watch commander system. Officers' pay starts on the hour at roll call.

Communication and Public Engagement Director Dawa Hitch discussed a recent community meeting where the public provided feedback on communications preferences. Councilman Pelly suggested partnering with the Neighborhood Advisory Committee as it develops systems for distributing information. Councilman Davis asked the Department to provide the Public Safety Committee the take home car policy.

Guest Byron Greiner asked how the Department was filling the vacancies. Deputy Chief Wade Wood responded that the academy expected to graduate 16 people soon. All vacancies will be filled by mid- August, though some of the personnel will be in place prior to finishing BLET.

### **3. New Business**

#### **a. Review of Police and Fire Call Distribution Data (as provided to the General Assembly)**

Assistant City Manager Paul Fetherston explained that State Representative Tim Moffitt requested Police and Fire call volume data for the City of Asheville. Chief Anderson reviewed the calls for service to the Police Department, noting that Fridays and Tuesdays were the days with the highest call volume, and 3-5 pm were the hours with the highest call volume. Chief Mike Knisley reviewed the calls for service to the Fire Department and noted similar trends. Fridays had the highest call volume and 3-5 pm was the time of day with the highest call volume. Chief Knisley reported that the daytime population of Asheville increased by 50%, Monday through Friday. 60% of calls were for emergency medical response. Sundays had the lowest call volume.

#### **b. 2014 Downtown Enhancement Plan Update**

Chief Anderson updated the Committee on the status of the 2014 Downtown Enhancement Plan. He reported a 3% decrease in overall crime in the Central Business District (CBD) from the previous year. The CBD saw a 40% increase in violent crime, rising from 9 to 14 incidents. Property crime decreased by 9%. The Department engaged in proactive enforcement, augmented officers through overtime, increased supervision, designated beats, and written a new strategic operating plan for the CBD. Park wardens were moved under the Police Department. A continued commitment to community oriented policing, the safe cam program, and continued meetings with business owners were all part of the approach. The Department was working with the Legal Department on a street entertainer ordinance.

### **4. Public Comment:**

- a.** Byron Greiner noted that the downtown businesses would be willing to offer discounts or provide other incentives to augment-officers in the CBD and suggested the use of decoy cars.

- b.** David Nutter said that he was a resident of Montford and walks downtown. He said that panhandling had increased and that he hoped to see something constructive and different done about it.

Chairperson Davis said that there was a rougher transient crowd this year. People should call the nonemergency number at the Police Department when they witness aggressive panhandling. Mr. Greiner suggested a centralized campus that included city, county, and Mission Hospital services out of the CBD, but on the bus line. Chairperson Davis reported that he was looking into how successful that model was in Chattanooga, TN.

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for 8/25/14.